Immersive Exhibition Inspired by Masterpiece in the CMA's Collection Offers Exploration of Natural Wonder Where Few Have Traveled

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Digital rendering courtesy of Technology Research Institute for Culture and Heritage.

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Into the Seven Jeweled Mountain exhibition takes visitors on a breathtaking journey

CLEVELAND (March 14, 2024)—Adventure into the striking volcanic terrain of the Seven Jeweled Mountain. Once a beloved tourist destination and Buddhist pilgrimage site, this natural wonder is now part of North Korea and isolated from most of the world. Through a collaboration with the Overseas Korean Cultural Heritage Foundation, the Cleveland Museum of Art's (CMA) newest exhibition *Into the Seven Jeweled Mountain: An Immersive*

Experience is an immersive digital experience with vivid animation inspired by a 19th-century folding screen depicting the mountain's scenery. At the same time this exhibition is on view in Cleveland, the National Palace Museum in Seoul will offer a similar experience, meaningfully connecting the two institutions in celebrating Korea's cultural heritage and history. The CMA's exhibition will be on view beginning Friday, March 15 through Sunday, September 29, 2024, in the Arlene M. and Arthur S. Holden Gallery.

"We are delighted to deepen our working relationship with the Overseas Korean Cultural Heritage Foundation," said William Griswold, director and president of the CMA. "*Into the Seven Jeweled Mountain* allows us to explore Korean landscape painting in an exciting, innovative way. Through the intersection of art and technology, visitors will have the opportunity to appreciate the natural beauty of a wonderous place and join in celebrating Korea's cultural heritage with an imaginative reinterpretation of a magnificent work of art in the museum's collection."

The original 19th-century folding screen that is the basis for the digital experience will be on view only at the CMA. "*Seven Jeweled Mountain* is a superb example of a Korean landscape painting tradition called 'true view,' where natural sites were carefully depicted to capture their unique terrain. In East Asia, landscape paintings were often used as substitutes for real nature. This very concept readily translates into immersive experiences through this exhibition," said Sooa McCormick, Korea Foundation Curator of Korean Art.

Named Seven Jeweled Mountain because of a local legend that seven different kinds of treasures—gold, silver, pearls, coral, seashells, agate, and crystal—were buried in the mountain, the region continued to gain popularity throughout the 1600s. Scholars, such as Im Hyeong-soo (1514–1547), wrote diaries about their hiking experience and court officials commissioned court painters to depict the mountain's topographic features to commemorate their trips. The CMA team used these historical accounts to serve as the basis for the exhibition.

The Cleveland Museum of Art's award-winning digital innovation team, in partnership with McCormick, created this project in collaboration with the Technology Research Institute for Culture & Heritage (TRIC). This latest digital venture leverages the monumental success of the pioneering immersive exhibition Revealing Krishna, a project for which the CMA joined forces with the National Museum of Cambodia to animate historical works of art through cutting-edge technology.

The CMA is also pleased to announce that this new digital journey is brought to life by English voice-over narration by renowned South Korean actor and photographer Ryu Jun-yeol, celebrated for his roles in a variety of critically acclaimed films and television dramas

including *Alienoid: Return to the Future* (2024), *The Night Owl* (2022), *A Taxi Driver* (2017), *The King* (2017), and *Believer* (2018). Mr. Ryu said, "It is an honor to participate in this groundbreaking project that brings audiences from the United States and South Korea to the majestic mountains of North Korea through art and digital technology. As an avid traveler, embodying the role of Im Hyeong-soo exploring the Seven Jeweled Mountain was an extraordinary experience for me."

With dynamic atmospheric changes, unique geological features, and breathtaking vistas, *Into the Seven Jeweled Mountain* provides visitors the opportunity of a lifetime to discover a place normally beyond reach. Visitors are encouraged to allow themselves to be immersed in the sublime sights and sounds of the mountain, amid music composed by Yang Bang-ean, as the 10-minute experience washes over them.

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